(b) if no permission has been given what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) how many applications have been received from Companies Corporations for the purpose, statewise, during 1985 and 1986 and how many of them have been permitted stating the names, Statewise?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER): (a) to (c) According to Ministry of Agriculture, 41 fresh applications for chartering of foreign fishing vessels were received during 1985 and 1986, but these were not considered for approval as the policy was under review. The revised policy on charter was announced in Jan., 1987 which *inter-alia* clarified that applications submitted under the earlier policy would be treated as rejected and closed.

No application for joint venture in deep sea fishing was received during 1985 and 1986

High powered Authority to advise on National Conservation Strategy

2323. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to constitute a high powered authority to advise on national conservation strategy in the country;

(b) if so, what are its terms of reference; and

(c) by when it is likely to start functioning?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) to (c) The details of an Environment Protection Authority, which, among other things, may advise Government on National Conservation Strategy, are being worked out.

P.M.'s Letter regarding merger of Punjab and Haryana

†2323-A. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister has written a letter to the Governor of Punjab, Shri S. S. Ray to work out the legal and other modalities regarding merger of Punjab and Haryana into one single State; and

(b) if so, what is the progress made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Editor of Economic and Political weekly

‡2323-B. SHRI RAMKRISHNA MAZUMDER:
SHRI CHITTA BASU:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Maharashtra Government have charge-sheeted the Editor of the "Economic and Political Weekly" under Section 124(A) and 505(1)(B) of the I.P.C.;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have examined the said charges; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

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†Previously Unstarred Question 2708 transferred from the 19th March, 1987.

‡Previously Unstarred Question 2608 transferred from the 19th March, 1987.